

Date: Saturday, May 23, 2015
Frequency: DAILY
Circulation: 74795
Clip Size: 7.47 sq. inches
Ad Rate: \$62.56
Page/Section: B 0002



Groundbreaking held for Omaha mosque

OMAHA — A groundbreaking ceremony was held this week for a planned mosque that will become part of Omaha interfaith campus, including Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The mosque is expected to open in late 2016 or early 2017. More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug into the ground during the ceremony Thursday.

The mosque helps complete plans for having the three faiths represented at the site. Plans for a Christian presence took shape last month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there. The church's pastor says they already have more than \$16 million in financial commitments toward construction.

The first piece of the interfaith campus came when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue there in 2013.



► NEWS AT A GLANCE

Ceremony for an Omaha mosque groundbreaking

OMAHA (AP) — A groundbreaking ceremony was held this week for a planned mosque that will become part of Omaha interfaith campus, including Christians, Jews and Muslims.

More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug into the ground Thursday to mark the forthcoming construction of the mosque, expected to open in late 2016 or early 2017, the Omaha World-Herald reported.

"This project captures the best of America," said Dalia Mogahed, who spoke at the ceremony and praised efforts to have the three faiths represented at the 35-acre site. She's the former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. "Appropriately it is in the heart of the country: Omaha."

Plans for a Christian presence took shape last month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there. The church's pastor said they already have more than \$16 million in financial commitments toward construction, which is at least a year away.

The first piece of the interfaith campus came when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue there in 2013.

The mosque will serve as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship, and nearly all funding has been raised to build it.



LINCOLN

Groundbreaking ceremony held for planned Omaha mosque

OMAHA — A groundbreaking ceremony was held this week for a planned mosque that will become part of Omaha interfaith campus, including Christians, Jews and Muslims.

More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug into the ground Thursday to mark the forthcoming construction of the mosque, expected to open in late 2016 or early 2017, the Omaha

World-Herald reported.

"This project captures the best of America," said Dalia Mogahed, who spoke at the ceremony and praised efforts to have the three faiths represented at the 35-acre site. She's the former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. "Appropriately it is in the heart of the country, Omaha."

Plans for a Christian presence took shape last

month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there. The church's pastor said they already have more than \$16 million in financial commitments toward construction, which is at least a year away.

The first piece of the interfaith campus came when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue there in 2013.

The mosque will serve

as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship, and nearly all funding has been raised to build it. The mosque project was estimated to be around \$6.2 million to \$6.5 million.

A fourth building planned for the site will serve as a shared center and provide, social, educational and conference space.



© Copyright 2015 All Rights Reserved

Children dig in to break ground for the American Muslim Institute, part of the Tri-Faith Initiative, Thursday in west Omaha.

SARAH HOFFMAN
 THE WORLD-HERALD



'A PLACE BUILT BY DREAMERS'

Mosque ground broken, interfaith campus moves closer

By MICHAEL O'CONNOR
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Usually businesspeople and politicians in suits hold the shovels and dig the dirt at groundbreaking ceremonies.

Not at an event Thursday evening in west Omaha. More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug in during a groundbreaking for a mosque at an interfaith site.

The children fit the theme interfaith leaders have given the project, one they say is brimming with energy and hope.

"Welcome to a place built by dreamers," said Dr. Syed Mohiuddin, one of the interfaith leaders.

Mohiuddin, president of the local group that will build the mosque, spoke to more than 300 people who attended the event at the interfaith site near 132nd and Pacific Streets.

Construction of the mosque is expected to start this fall, said Mohiuddin of the American Muslim Institute, and the goal is for it to open in late 2016 or early 2017.

The mosque helps complete plans for having three faith groups represented — Christians, Muslims and Jews — at the site.

"We move a step closer," said Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, a leader of the Tri-Faith

See Mosque: Page 2

Mosque: Speaker says interfaith project 'captures the best of America'

Initiative organization, the nonprofit group coordinating the interfaith effort.

Dalia Mogahed, former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, spoke during the event and praised the interfaith effort.

"This project captures the best of America," she said. "Appropriately it is in the heart of the country, Omaha."

The 35-acre interfaith site is in the Sterling Ridge retail-office-residential development on the former Highland Country Club golf course, more recently known as Ironwood.

The mosque will serve as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship. Nearly

all of the money has been raised for building the mosque, estimated to cost \$6.2 million to \$6.5 million, including land.

The donors to the mosque include a mix of Muslims and non-Muslims. All funding is from local sources, he said.

The plans for a Christian presence at the interfaith site took shape last month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there.

The cost is estimated at about \$25 million, including land, said the Rev. Eric Elnes, Countryside pastor. Countryside already has \$16.1 million in firm financial commitments toward construction, mostly from congregation members, who number about

1,500, Elnes said. Construction is at least a year away, he said.

The first piece of the interfaith campus landed in place when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue at the site in 2013.

A fourth building planned for the site will serve as a shared interfaith center and provide social, educational and conference space.

Organizers of the interfaith effort believe that the site might be the only one in the nation where three such congregations are planning to locate at the same place.

Contact the writer:
 402-444-1122, michael.oconnor@owh.com



SOURCE: Sterling Ridge developers

THE WORLD-HERALD



SARAH HOFFMAN/THE WORLD-HERALD

Dalia Mogahed, former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, speaks during Thursday's groundbreaking ceremony for the American Muslim Institute.



The architects' rendering of the completed mosque, which will serve as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship.

SLAGGIE ARCHITECTS



© Copyright 2015 All Rights Reserved

Children dig in to break ground for the American Muslim Institute, part of the Tri-Faith Initiative, Thursday in west Omaha.

SARAH HOFFMAN
 THE WORLD-HERALD



'A PLACE BUILT BY DREAMERS'

Mosque ground broken, interfaith campus moves closer

BY MICHAEL O'CONNOR
 WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Usually businesspeople and politicians in suits hold the shovels and dig the dirt at groundbreaking ceremonies.

Not at an event Thursday evening in west Omaha. More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug in during a groundbreaking for a mosque at an interfaith site.

The children fit the theme interfaith leaders have given the project, one they say is brimming with energy and hope.

"Welcome to a place built by dreamers," said Dr. Syed Mohiuddin, one of the interfaith leaders.

Mohiuddin, president of the local group that will build the mosque, spoke to more than 300 people who attended the event at the interfaith site near 132nd and Pacific Streets.

Construction of the mosque is expected to start this fall, said Mohiuddin of the American Muslim Institute, and the goal is for it to open in late 2016 or early 2017.

The mosque helps complete plans for having three faith groups represented — Christians, Muslims and Jews — at the site.

"We move a step closer," said Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, a leader of the Tri-Faith

See Mosque: Page 2

Mosque: Speaker says interfaith project 'captures the best of America'

Initiative organization, the nonprofit group coordinating the interfaith effort.

Dalia Mogahed, former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, spoke during the event and praised the interfaith effort.

"This project captures the best of America," she said. "Appropriately it is in the heart of the country, Omaha."

The 35-acre interfaith site is in the Sterling Ridge retail-office-residential development on the former Highland Country Club golf course, more recently known as Ironwood.

The mosque will serve as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship. Nearly

all of the money has been raised for building the mosque, estimated to cost \$6.2 million to \$6.5 million, including land.

The donors to the mosque include a mix of Muslims and non-Muslims. All funding is from local sources, he said.

The plans for a Christian presence at the interfaith site took shape last month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there.

The cost is estimated at about \$25 million, including land, said the Rev. Eric Elnes, Countryside pastor. Countryside already has \$16.1 million in firm financial commitments toward construction, mostly from congregation members, who number about

1,500, Elnes said. Construction is at least a year away, he said.

The first piece of the interfaith campus landed in place when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue at the site in 2013.

A fourth building planned for the site will serve as a shared interfaith center and provide social, educational and conference space.

Organizers of the interfaith effort believe that the site might be the only one in the nation where three such congregations are planning to locate at the same place.

Contact the writer:
 402-444-1122, michael.oconnor@owh.com



SOURCE: Sterling Ridge developers

THE WORLD-HERALD



SARAH HOFFMAN/THE WORLD-HERALD

Dalia Mogahed, former executive director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, speaks during Thursday's groundbreaking ceremony for the American Muslim Institute.



The architects' rendering of the completed mosque, which will serve as an institute for Muslim prayer, learning and fellowship.

SLAGGIE ARCHITECTS



Groundbreaking Ceremony For Planned Omaha Mosque

OMAHA (AP) — A groundbreaking ceremony was held this week for a planned mosque that will become part of Omaha interfaith campus, including Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The Omaha World-Herald reports the mosque is expected to open in late 2016 or early 2017. More than a dozen local Muslim children grabbed shovels and dug into the ground during the Thursday ceremony.

The mosque helps complete plans for having the three faiths represented at the site.

Plans for a Christian presence took shape last month when members of Countryside Community Church voted to relocate there. The church's pastor says they already have more than \$16 million in financial commitments toward construction.

The first piece of the interfaith campus came when Temple Israel moved into its new synagogue there in 2013.